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SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

CITY OF MANTECA

CALIFORNIA

Adopted per Resolution #R 5942 By The Manteca
City Council on September 15, 1975

BACKGROUND

Legislative Authority

In response to increasing public concern for the preservation of scenic historical, and recreational resources and, perhaps also, to restimulate flagging interest in the decade-old State Scenic Highways Program, the California Legislature in 1972 mandated a Scenic Highways Element in all city and county General Plans. Government Code Section 65302 (h) describes the requirements as follows:

The plan shall include "a scenic highway element for the development, establishment, and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2, Division 1 of the Streets and Highways Code."

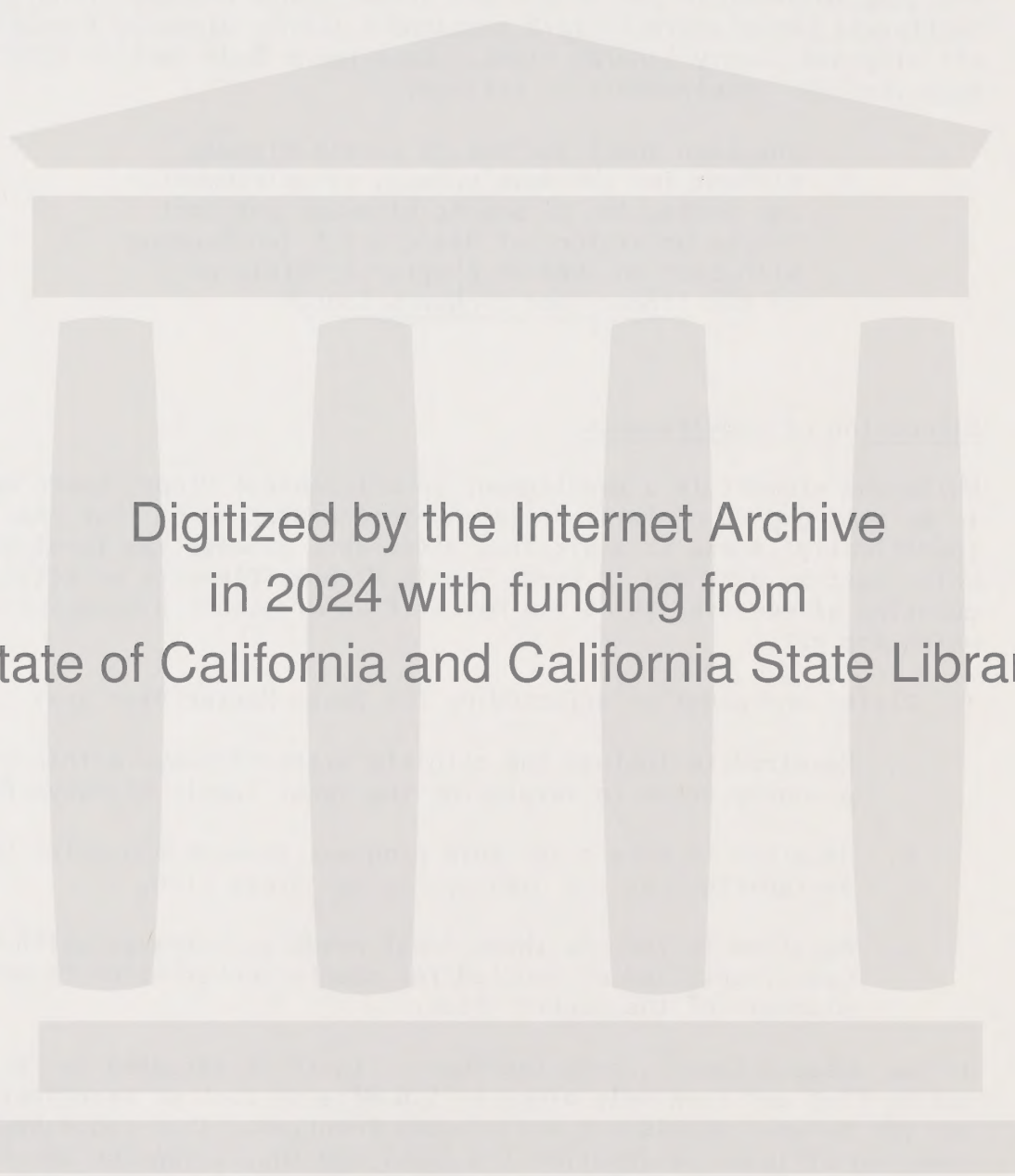
Discussion of Requirements

While the element is a requirement in all General Plans, there appears to be some degree of latitude in the interpretation of that requirement. Specifically, there is a distinct difference between the level of effort which must be expended in those Scenic Highway Elements of cities and counties affected by the State Master Plan of Scenic Highways and those which are not.

1. Cities and counties affected by the State Master Plan are:
 - a. Required to include the eligible state highways within their planning areas in developing the local Scenic Highways Element.
 - b. Required to make reasonable progress towards achieving "official designation" of the highways in the State Plan.
 - c. Required to include those local roads and streets which have been identified or implied for scenic conservation in other elements of the General Plan.

In San Joaquin County, only the County itself is affected by the State Master Plan and then only along a 15.6 mile stretch of Interstates 5 and 580 between Stanislaus and Alameda Counties. This route has already received official designation (in 1974) and thus attention should be shifted to the designation and protection of local scenic roads. The County has clearly stated its intent to recognize and protect scenic routes (General Plan to 1990, Circulation and Transportation Policies) and this necessitates a careful evaluation of potential choices.

2. Cities and counties not affected by the State Master Plan are not required to designate their own scenic highways. However, preparation of a Scenic Highways Element is required if called for or implied by the policies of other General Plan Elements dealing with the subject of scenic conservation.



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GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

To preserve and enhance the scenic qualities of the City of Manteca.

POLICIES

1. It shall be a policy of the City of Manteca to provide for an improved visual environment and to encourage consideration of visual aesthetics in future development.
2. It shall be a policy of the City of Manteca to encourage and cooperate with the development of scenic routes in San Joaquin County and to support the provision of multiple-use recreational facilities along these routes including but not limited to bicycle paths, hiking and riding trails, picnic and rest stops, and vista points.
3. It shall be a policy of the City of Manteca to recognize that urban as well as rural areas may be considered scenic if they include such things as interesting or important historical and/or cultural features, or views of open space and city-scape scenes.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Definitions

The three basic terms used in the Scenic Highways Element are defined here.

Scenic Corridor - the visible land area outside of the highway right-of-way which, for all practical purposes can be described as the "view from the road" and which can be reasonably protected from incompatible (unaesthetic) development.

Scenic Route - a highway, road, drive or street which, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for enjoyment of natural and man-made scenic resources where aesthetic values are protected and enhanced.

Officially Designated Scenic Route or Highway - a state or county route whose scenic corridor protection program has been approved by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), is shown on official publications and is posted with official California State flower (poppy) signs.

Recommendations

After careful review of the San Joaquin County (Draft) Scenic Highways Element and the existing local physical features of the City of Manteca, it is recommended that no scenic routes in the city be designated at this time. However, the City does support the standards, criteria and recommendations of the County Scenic Highways Element and, if warranted by local interest, will consider future exploration of designating and developing scenic routes, either within or outside its corporate boundaries.

3. All cities and counties, regardless of the effects of the State Master Plan:
 - a. Have the option of developing local scenic routes following more simplified procedures than those required for official designation of State Scenic Highways.
 - b. Have a responsibility to reflect public interest in scenic conservation within their jurisdictions. The Scenic Highways Element provides an excellent opportunity to fulfill that responsibility.
 - c. Likewise have a responsibility to advise the state as to whether additions should be made to the State Master Plan.
4. All counties have the option of seeking official state designation of a system of scenic county roads.

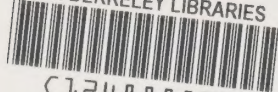
Purpose

The Scenic Highways Element of the City of Manteca is designed not only to satisfy State law but also to serve as a policy guide for the establishment of local scenic routes. Further, it seeks to guide the preservation and enhancement of scenic qualities and natural scenic areas adjacent to and visible from scenic routes. Public benefits which may be accrued from the Scenic Highways Element are numerous and not not limited solely to improving the visual environment. The element can also result to enhance property values, improved recreational facilities, better land management, and the preservation of important open space.

Stated more fully, the element is intended to establish official policy regarding:

1. Goals, policies, and general standards for the development of a scenic route system and the preservation and enhancement of adjacent and visible scenic areas.
2. Coordination of scenic route proposals and programs among various levels of government and with concerned citizen groups and interested individuals.
3. Establishment of procedures for the future designation and development of scenic routes in the City of Manteca if desired.

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